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C O N F I D E N T I A L DUBLIN 000084

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E.O. 12958: DECL: 02/14/2018
TAGS: [MOPS](#) [PARM](#) [PREL](#) [NATO](#) [EI](#)
SUBJECT: IRELAND WILLING TO DISCUSS INTEROPERABILITY ISSUES
AT WELLINGTON CLUSTER MUNITIONS CONFERENCE

REF: A. STATE 13607

[1](#)B. DUBLIN 43
[1](#)C. DUBLIN 33

Classified By: Pol/Econ Section Chief Ted Pierce
Reasons 1.4 (B) and (D).

[1](#)1. (C) Summary: This is an action request; see paragraph 4. Ireland is still hoping for a complete ban on cluster munitions as part of the Oslo Process, although it recognizes that not all EU Member States agree with this position. The Irish Government recognizes that interoperability remains a point of contention and expects this issue to be the main focus of the Wellington conference. Ireland is open to suggestions from the USG on wording that could be used in the Oslo Process draft text, which would help resolve interoperability issues. End summary.

[1](#)2. (C) POLOFF met with Nicholas Twist, Deputy Director, Disarmament and Non-Proliferation Division, Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA), on February 13 to deliver Ref A demarche. POLOFF emphasized that the USG recognizes the potential humanitarian impact of cluster munitions and that we are committed to addressing these issues through the CCW. Twist acknowledged USG efforts and applauded the amount of funding the USG has provided to clean up munitions. Nonetheless, he said, Ireland was firmly focused on banning all cluster munitions due, in part, to the "horrors" Minister for Foreign Affairs Dermot Ahern personally saw during his visit to Lebanon after the conflict with Israel in 2006. Observing the direct impact of cluster munitions on civilian populations brought the problem to the forefront of Irish policy, Twist said.

[1](#)3. (C) Twist, who will be part of Ireland's delegation to Wellington, recently returned from Brussels where EU discussions took place on the upcoming Oslo Process conference in Wellington. He told POLOFF that not all EU Member States support a complete ban on cluster munitions, largely due to interoperability issues. He acknowledged that interoperability would be the main topic of debate during the upcoming Wellington conference. Acknowledging that interoperability problems could adversely affect future humanitarian relief, peacekeeping, and joint training missions, Twist said the Irish Government would welcome input from the USG on proposed language that would address interoperability issues in the current Oslo Process draft text. Twist also inquired about the internal review of USG policy regarding cluster munitions and asked if post could provide him with any report that might be published.

[1](#)4. (C) Action request: Please advise post what language might be used in the Oslo Process draft text that would help resolve interoperability issues. If such language is available, the Department may wish Embassy Wellington to

engage the Irish delegation directly in New Zealand. Please also advise if the results of the internal review on USG cluster munitions policy can be made available to the Government of Ireland. End action request.

15. (C) Comment: In contrast to previous discussions on cluster munitions (Ref C), Twist was more amenable to discussing possible changes to the Oslo Process draft text, which would allow for interoperability with non-state parties -- perhaps bowing to the debate among EU Member States on interoperability issues. Although he did not state it explicitly, Twist implied that the draft text must be changed to deal with interoperability problems if the Oslo Process is to move forward. This echoes DFA Political Director Rory Montgomery's statements to EUR/WE Office Director Kathy Allegrone on January 18 (Ref B).

FAUCHER